



Recycled Wool Rug

Written By: Peggy Campbell



TOOLS:

- [1-Dent reed \(1\)](#)
you'll need to make this by modifying an existing reed to make it 1 wire per inch.
- [Loom \(1\)](#)
2-Harness loom, 36" wide, adapted to weave with rags you can also use a simple frame loom.
- [Measuring tape \(1\)](#)
- [Scissors \(1\)](#)
- [Sewing machine \(1\)](#)



PARTS:

- [Wool sweaters \(7-12\)](#)
to make 28 strips of rag 6' long.

SUMMARY

Introduction by Wendy Tremayne

I once heard someone refer to a rug as a guest rather than a possession. A home without a carpet does feel lonely. We suspect that even our “guests” have a story to tell. We search them for traces of places, times, and people, for records of beliefs and events.

In Russian folk tales, the writings of Mark Twain, and the classic stories of Arabian Nights, the flying carpet traverses continents. Accompanied by the wind, it carries us through the

colors of an ever-changing sky, animate, sturdy, luxurious, and able to deliver dreams.

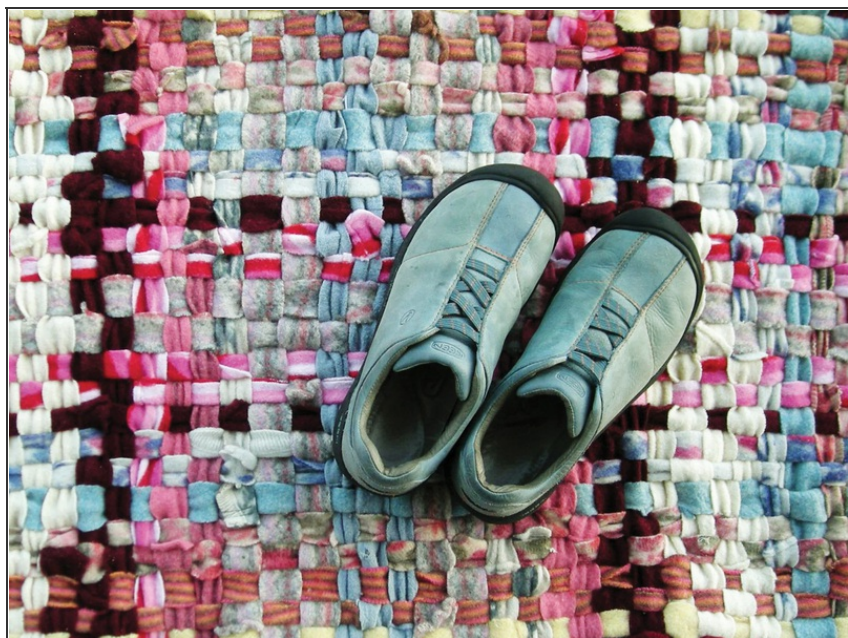
Peggy Campbell is a modern rug maker. Her rag-rug creations are made from the once-loved sweaters of unknown others. Campbell wanted quality and found it in felted wool. She filled her loom with repurposed woven garments because they were available and they offered a great variety of color. Now she buys them in bulk from a textile supplier who provides reused materials.

From her father, who was a painter, Campbell inherited an appreciation for harmony in hue. Her rugs are a showcase for color. She sees a “blurred line” between art and what is utilitarian. “In the same way a painter puts paint on a canvas, I put colored warp and weft into my rugs,” she says.

Campbell’s home in Terrace Bay, Ontario, Canada, is adorned with her textured works in earthy colors. The lush, soft pieces make all who inhabit the space feel cozy.

Perhaps the magic carpet is hostage to the mythic realm, and not found in Campbell’s living room, but pixie dust can be devised if one follows her mastered method. She invites us to materialize our own colorful world: a woolly nest for a cold room, a playful pad to welcome guests, a soft spot for a loved pet to doze upon, or a sphere of color simply to delight the imagination.

Step 1 — Let's define some terms.



- **Reed:** A comb, closed on both sides, that fits into the beater to beat the weft threads into place.
- **Dent:** A space in the reed. Reeds are measured in dents per inch.
- **Sley:** To thread the warp ends through the dents in the reed.
- **Heddle:** A device that raises and lowers the warp threads. It can be a rigid piece of wood, metal, or plastic, or a series of wire or cord loops connected to a shaft.
- **Shed:** The space that forms when the warp is raised to allow a shuttle to pass through.
- **Selvages:** Edges of the web of cloth being woven.

Step 2 — Full the sweaters and cut into strips.



- Wash the wool sweaters in hot and then cold water until they're felted, so they don't unravel when cut.
- Once dry, cut sweaters into 1 1/4"–1 1/2" rag strips, starting at the bottom of the sweater. Cut 1 continuous strip.

Step 3 — Warp the loom.



- Allow for fringe and loom waste: warp 1epi (ends per inch), 28" wide, 28 warp ends, 2yds long.

Step 4 — Sley 1 warp end per dent.



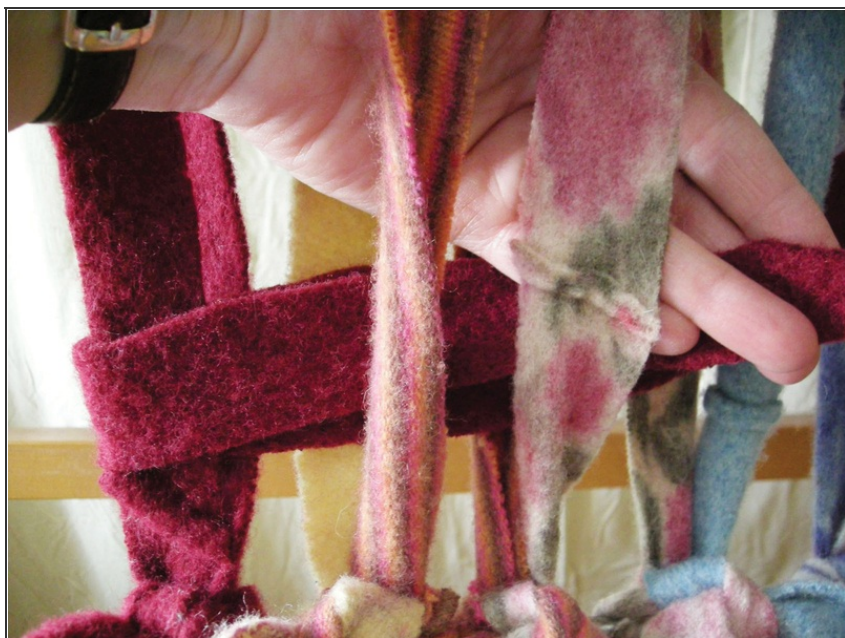
- Center your warp on the loom and tie each warp thread (rag) onto the back or top beam using a half hitch knot. The warp is the length of your rug.

Step 5 — Thread the rags.



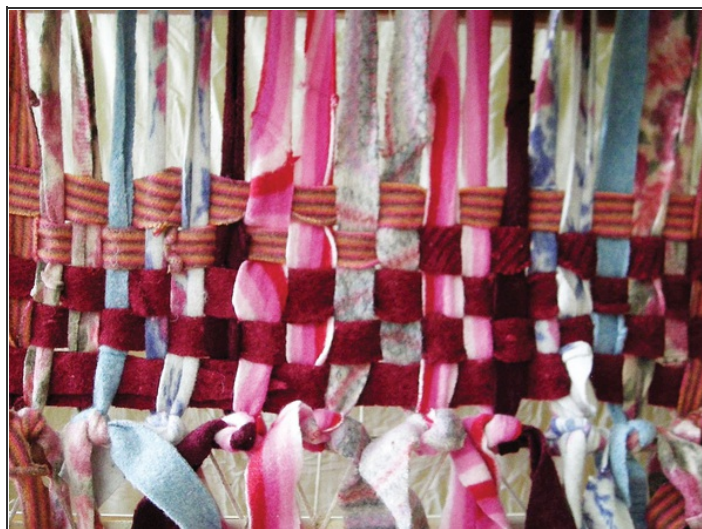
- Thread the rags through the heddles and your reed. Wind the warp onto the back beam. Tie the warp onto your front apron (front beam) using a reef knot. Check for even tension.

Step 6 — Lay the weft loosely in the shed.



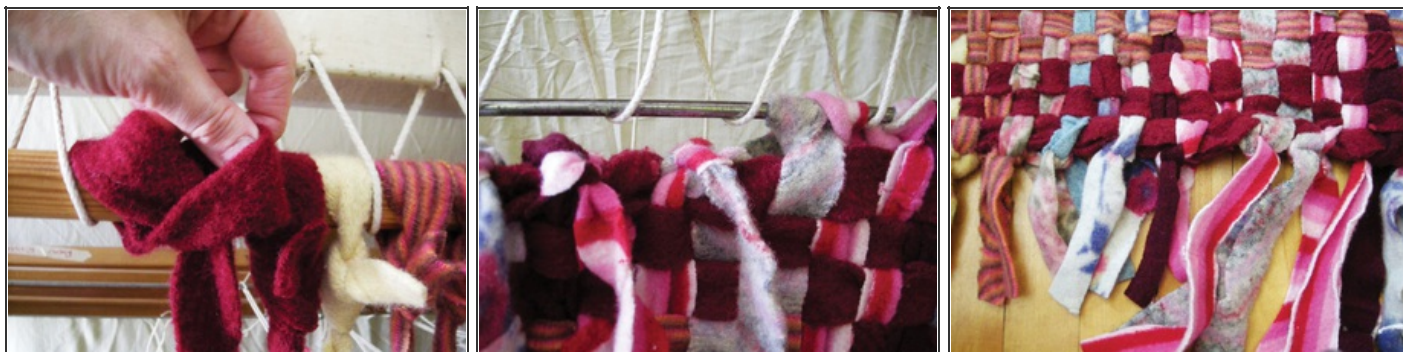
- Allow about 8"–10" including tie-on for fringe. Leave an 8" tail and weave it back in on itself. Beat firmly.

Step 7 — Weave, sewing the rag ends together.



- Join ends with a sewing machine when you change color. Weave the rug until you can no longer advance the warp. Watch your selvages and measure to see that they remain even.

Step 8 — Untie the warp and knot the fringe, then trim the edge.



- Untie 2 warp threads at a time from the top of the loom. Tie these threads in a reef knot close to the rug to make your fringe. Continue tying, 2 by 2, until you have the top edge finished. Repeat on the bottom.
- Lay the rug out on the floor and trim the fringe to your desired length.

This project first appeared in [CRAFT Volume 08](#), pages 152-153.

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